

REMARKS

Amendment to the Specification

The Specification at Page 6, Line 26 is amended to replace the unit "?m" with "micrometers." Applicants request entry of the Amendment and withdrawal of the objection given that the "?m" was clearly a clerical error, i.e., "?" was typed instead of " μ " (the typical symbol for "micro"), or clearly a misprint, i.e., "?" printed instead of " μ " (the typical symbol for "micro"); and it would be clear to one skilled in the art that " μ m" was intended because the symbol " μ m," along with the words "micron" and "micrometer," are used interchangeably to indicate "one millionth of a meter."

Amendments to the Claims

Claim 1 is amended to require a process for the preparation of catalyst particles with a particle diameter in the range of 20 to less than 1000 microns. Claim 5 is cancelled. New claims 8, 9, and 10 are added. The amendments to the Claims are supported by the Specification as filed.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 1 - 6 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Gupta et al.

Applicants request withdrawal of this rejection. Applicants' claim 1, as currently amended, requires (a) agitating at least two dry catalyst ingredients, and (b) spraying a liquid binding agent on the catalyst ingredients while continuing the agitation (emphasis added). As noted on page 6 of the specification at line 28, in the process of this invention, continuing the agitation is important for obtaining the right particle size. Applicants can find no teaching or suggestion in Gupta et al. to spray a liquid binding agent on the catalyst ingredients while continuing agitation. To the contrary, at column 6, lines 52 - 56, Gupta states "The method involves intimate mixing of a very fine zinc and titanium dioxide with organic and inorganic binders and modifiers in a specially designed granulator followed by addition of a liquid binder solution in the form of a fine spray (emphasis added)". Also, at column 8, lines 15 - 23, Gupta describes mixing and states starting at line 18 "The chopper rotor is located in the center of the chamber

and is designed to admix and homogenize the charge of fine powders. After the powder is completely admixed, a liquid binder solution is evenly dispersed using an air atomizing spray nozzle throughout the dry powder (emphasis added)" ; and at lines 30 - 36, Gupta states "In the granulator, first zinc oxide, titanium oxide, and the clay binder . . . are dry-mixed . . . Approximately 15 to 20 weight percent of liquid binder, . . . is then added". These excerpts indicate that Gupta intends spray drying after mixing or agitation. Claims 2 - 4 and claim 6 depend from claim 1, as currently amended, and thus are patentable in view of Gupta et al. for the same reasons that claim 1 is patentable. Claim 5 is cancelled.

Claims 1 - 6 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Rainis.

Applicants request withdrawal of this rejection. Applicants' claim 1, as currently amended, requires a process for the preparation of catalyst particles with a particle diameter in the range of 20 to less than 1000 microns (emphasis added). The Examiner notes that Rainis discloses a process for making spheroidal bodies having a size range of 1000 to 2000 micrometers. Applicants note that at column 11, lines 60 - 62, Rainis discloses agglomerates with a diameter of 1 to 3 mm. Applicants see no teaching or suggestion in Rainis of a process for making catalyst particles with a diameter in the range of 20 to less than 1000 microns. Claims 2 - 4 and claim 6 depend from claim 1, as currently amended, and thus are patentable in view of Rainis for the same reasons that claim 1 is patentable. Claim 5 is cancelled.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 103

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gupta et al..

Applicants request withdrawal of this rejection. Claim 7 ultimately depends from Claim 1, as currently amended, and requires spraying a liquid binding agent on the catalyst ingredients while continuing the agitation (emphasis added). As noted above in regard to the 35 USC 102 rejection, Applicants can find no teaching or suggestion in Gupta et al. to spray a liquid binding agent on the catalyst ingredients while continuing agitation.

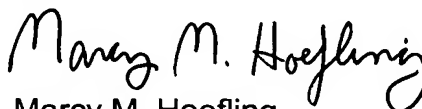
Claim 7 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rainis.

Applicants request withdrawal of this rejection. Claim 7 ultimately depends from

claim 1, as currently amended, and thus requires a process for the preparation of catalyst particles with a particle diameter in the range of 20 to less than 1000 microns (emphasis added). As noted above in regard to the 35 USC 102 rejection, Applicants see no teaching or suggestion in Rainis of a process for making catalyst particles with a diameter in the range of 20 to less than 1000 microns.

Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. The Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants' attorney should the Examiner wish to discuss this application further.

Respectfully submitted,



Marcy M. Hoefling
Reg. No. 33,955
Attorney for Applicants

Telephone No.: (225) 388-7210
Facsimile No.: (225) 388-7239

Correspondence Address: Albemarle Corporation
Law Department
451 Florida Street
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70801-1765